



The Cost for the EU of 'Losing' Turkey (WP)

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(1) Summary

In five years of negotiations Turkey has only opened 13 of the 35 'chapters' or areas of EU law and policy needed to complete the process. Because so many of the other chapters are blocked for various reasons, only three are left to be opened. Patience is wearing thin on the Turkish side. The cost for Europe of 'losing' Turkey would be high in the spheres of foreign policy, migration, economic benefits and defence and security, among others.

(2) Background and Current Situation¹

Turkey's EU accession negotiations, which have proceeded at a snail's pace since they started in October 2005, run the risk of grinding to a complete halt. The country, which has been nearly five decades waiting in Europe's ante-room (it became an associate EEC member in 1963), has only opened 13 of the 35 'chapters' or areas of EU law and policy needed to complete the process. It has closed just one of them (science and research). About 18 chapters (the key ones) are blocked or frozen by the EU as a whole, by France or

* *Signature.*

¹ The idea for this Paper came after Gema Martín Muñoz, the Director of the Casa Árabe in Madrid, invited me to participate in a conference on the cost for Europe of Turkey not joining the EU. I would also like to thank Richard Youngs, the Director of FRIDE in Madrid, for inviting me to contribute a chapter on Turkey to a pocket-book on the challenges for European foreign policy in 2011.



by Cyprus. The Spanish EU Presidency in the first half of 2010 had hoped to open four chapters, but only opened one (food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy) and then on the very last day of its Presidency, while the Belgian EU Presidency achieved nothing in this field in the second half of last year. It is hoped that the current Hungarian Presidency will open one (competition policy). That leaves just two chapters, one of which is on public procurement, but Ankara does not see why it should open its potentially lucrative market to greater competition from European countries if there are no guarantees of joining the European club one day.

In December 2006 the EU unanimously suspended eight chapters because Turkey refused to extend its customs union with the EU (in effect since 1996) and allow Greek-Cypriot vessels access to its ports and airports, thereby recognising the state of Cyprus. Ankara will not budge until the European Council (EC) fulfils its promise to ease the economic isolation of the internationally-unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). All of Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, but the *acquis communautaire* only applies to the Greek-Cypriot southern part of the island. This is because the northern part (36% of the territory) has been occupied by Turkey since its military intervention in 1974 (under the 1960 treaty of guarantee which gave it the right to take action, though not to stay there indefinitely), following inter-communal strife between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and an attempt to incorporate the island into Greece through a coup. After the April 2004 referendum in which Turkish Cypriots voted overwhelmingly 'yes' for the Annan Plan to reunify Cyprus (Greek Cypriots massively rejected it), the EC promised to alleviate the TRNC's economic seclusion. The first action of a divided Cyprus as an EU member since May 2004 was to block this gesture, and since then Cyprus has become a single-issue member state, vetoing Turkey's every move.

As well as the eight chapters suspended by the EU and six by Cyprus, France is blocking five chapters (there are overlaps) related to economic and monetary union, on the grounds that this opens the door to full EU membership. Candidate status gives Turkey every right to expect full membership if it closes all the chapters, as has been the case for all other applicants. Instead of full EU membership, President Nicolas Sarkozy and Chancellor Angela Merkel have offered Turkey a 'privileged partnership' without even defining what this means. The EU's relations with Turkey should be conducted according to the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, a central pillar of the European integration project.

As a result of all these developments, Turkey's support for EU membership has unsurprisingly plummeted since 2004 as more and more people feel that the negotiations are not proceeding on an equal footing (see Figure 1). The Turkish intelligentsia, at least, has not forgotten the words of the European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, when in 2004 he declared, then as the Belgian Prime Minister, that Turkey 'is not part of Europe and never will be'.² In a similar vein, Joseph Ratzinger, before he became Pope

² When Turkey signed in 1963 an association agreement with the EEC, Walter Hallstein, a Christian Democrat

Benedict XVI, also declared in 2004: 'In the course of history, Turkey has always represented a different continent, in permanent contrast to Europe'.

Figure 1. Turkey Joining the EU Would be a Good Thing (%)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Turkey	73	63	54	40	42	48	41
US	43	37	35	40	32	41	38
EU (1)	29	22	21	22	21	20	23

(1) EU-7 for 2002-06 and EU-11 for 2007-10.

Source: Transatlantic Trends 2010, German Marshall Fund of the United States.

The new focus on the Middle East is enjoying increasing support among Turks, having doubled to 20% in the last year (see Figure 2). This was accompanied by a nine-point decline in those who said Turkey should cooperate with the EU.

Figure 2. With Whom Should Turkey Act in Closest Cooperation? (%)

	2009	2010
Turkey should act alone	43	34
Countries of the EU	22	13
Countries of the Middle East	10	20
US	4	6
Russia	3	5

Source: Transatlantic Trends 2010, German Marshall Fund of the United States.

What would be the cost for Europe of Turkey never joining the EU? This Working Paper looks at the various areas that would be affected. While the name of the game in the EU as a whole seems to be to do the minimum to keep Turkey on board in the accession negotiations, there is no guarantee that the policy will succeed. Neither side wants to make the first move and throw in the towel, particularly Turkey. A decision to terminate Turkey's EU accession process would require unanimity among the 27 EU governments, something that would be extremely difficult to achieve.

The arguments for letting the country into the EU if it fulfils the conditions are well known and regularly trotted out by Ankara's supporters, particularly the UK, Spain, Sweden and Italy. The well-reasoned reports of the Independent Commission, headed by the former Finnish President and Nobel laureate Martti Ahtisaari, and the Reflection Group, led by the former Spanish Prime Minister Felipe González, both in favour of Turkey's membership if the country meets all the conditions, fall on deaf ears. It is the opponents, principally France and Germany, who are making all the running.

who was the first President of the European Commission, hailed this as explicit recognition that 'Turkey is part of Europe'. That view is shared by few in the CDU party today.

(3) Economic Consequences

It is a measure of the success of the Turkish economy in recent years that the British Prime Minister David Cameron regards Turkey as the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) of Europe. With an annual average real GDP growth rate of close to 6% between 2003 and 2010, Turkey is the fastest-growing G20 economy after China and is slated to be the second-largest economy in Europe by 2050. It is currently the 16th largest economy in the world and the sixth compared to EU countries (in purchasing power parity). Per capita GDP increased from US\$3,500 in 2002 to more than US\$9,000 in 2010.

As a result of much better macroeconomic management than during the 1990s, regarded as a 'lost decade', the country currently meets the Maastricht criteria in terms of budget deficit and the stock of public debt (below 3% of GDP in the first case and less than 60% in the second). Thanks to structural reforms introduced in 2001, the banking system has survived the international financial crisis largely unscathed. A strong and stable Turkish economy is very much in the EU's interests, as this would enhance business opportunities and reduce the need for Turks to migrate and find jobs elsewhere. Despite all the progress made, unemployment remains high (the average jobless rate was 11% between 2005 and 2010).

Over the last 30 years, Turkey has become a much more open economy. Exports and imports of goods and services rose from 17% of GDP in 1980 to 52.3% in 2008, although compared to other countries with a similar level of development it is still modest (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Degree of Openness of the Turkish Economy, 1980-2008 (% of GDP)

	1980	1990	2000	2008
Turkey	17.1	31.0	43.2	52.3
Euro area	52.8	54.7	72.9	80.1
Middle-income countries	32.5	39.3	52.8	59.7

Source: World Bank, Quick Query Data Source.

The EU is by far Turkey's most important trade partner and supplies more than three-quarters of the country's foreign direct investment (FDI). Turkey has great potential for European business, with its young and fast-growing market (half of the 75 million population is under the age of 29), its proved base for high-quality manufacturing and its companies familiar with a wide and developing region of which Turkey is a principal commercial hub.

The strong growth in FDI is testimony to Turkey's attractiveness. For decades Turkey received no more than US\$1 billion of FDI a year. As a result of the decision taken in December 2004 to open accession negotiations in October 2005, this changed in one fell swoop. FDI in 2005 surged to US\$10 billion and reached US\$22 billion in 2007 (see Figure 4). Between 2008 and 2010 Turkey was the 15th most attractive destination for FDI,

according to the UNCTAD World Investment Prospects Survey. Failure to join the EU would clearly harm European companies in their attempts to win contracts.

Figure 4. FDI Flows in Turkey (US\$ billion) and Stock (% of GDP)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
FDI flows	1.7	2.8	10.0	20.0	22.0	18.1	7.6
Stock as % of GDP (1990 = 5.6)							12.6

Note: the annual average FDI flow for 1990-2000 was US\$0.8 bn.

Source: World Investment Report 2010, UNCTAD.

Spain is among those countries whose corporate sector is positioning itself in Turkey. BBVA, Spain's second-largest bank, acquired 24.9% of Turkey's Garanti Bank in 2010 and may take full control of it in five years. Garanti is part of the Dogus Group, Turkey's third-largest conglomerate.

Turkey's population currently represents around 15% of the EU-27's population of 500 million, while its GDP accounts for just over 4% of the Union's total. On this basis, the beneficial economic effects of Turkey's EU membership are likely to be asymmetric, ie, small for the Union as a whole and much larger for Turkey.

The impact on the EU, however, will very much depend on the way the Turkish economy develops over the next two decades. Even if all the blocked chapters were unblocked overnight, it is most unlikely that Turkey would join the EU until sometime in the 2020s and by then the Turkish economy, if the current stellar performance is kept up (by the withering standards of Europe as a whole), could very well be in a much stronger position. In that case, the positive impact on the EU could very well be greater than is generally considered today.

(4) The Energy Impact

Turkey is set to play a major role in the EU's future energy needs and diversification policy. This is better done with the country inside the Union as security of Europe's supply would be enhanced.

The European Commission estimates the EU's overall import dependency will rise from more than 53% to around 70% by 2026, despite the efforts directed at saving energy and improved energy efficiency.³ In the case of natural gas and oil, import dependency levels are forecast to reach more than 80% and 90%, respectively.

Turkey itself has no oil or natural gas of its own, but it is ideally placed as an energy corridor between Central Asia and Europe.⁴ EU countries obtain oil from a large number

³ European Commission (2006), *A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, Green Paper.

⁴ Exploration is underway in the Black Sea and the results are yet to be announced.



of sources, but in the case of natural gas there is a very high level of dependency on Russia. This is neither politically wise or economically advantageous, particularly in the case of authoritarian Russia. When Moscow turned off the gas to Ukraine in 2006 it sent shudders across Europe as customers are increasingly dependent on Russia to keep warm.

The 2008 EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan emphasises the central role of Turkey for secure gas supplies to Europe. There are currently seven pipelines in operation in Turkey and seven planned (see Figures 5 and 6). The 3,300km Nabucco pipeline, in particular, is of crucial importance as it is designed to bring gas from Central Asia, one of the world's richest gas regions, to Austria via Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. The pipeline is aimed at meeting 5% to 10% of European gas requirements as well as functioning as an alternative supply route that would end the complete dependency of some eastern European member states on Russia. The main supplier countries in this project are Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan (both of which have close relations with Turkey as they are part of the Turkic world) and Iraq.

Figure 5. Turkey as an Energy Hub: Pipelines in Operation

	Basic Facts	Turkey's Involvement
Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline	1,768km long, operational since May 2006. Daily capacity: 1 million barrels.	669 km on Turkish territory, including the Ceyhan terminal. 6.53% ownership consortium.
South Caucasus (Baku-Tbilisi-Ezurum, BTE) gas pipeline	669km on Turkish territory, including the Ceyhan terminal. 6.53% ownership consortium.	Turkey holds 9% in the consortium and is its main consumer.
Tabriz-Ankara gas pipeline	2,577km long, operational since 2001. Annual capacity: 10 bcm.	BOTAS operates the Turkish section. Turkey is the consumer.
Blue Stream gas pipeline	1,213km, links Russia and Turkey through a pipe running under the Black Sea. Operational since February 2003. Annual capacity: 16 bcm.	Turkey owns sections on its territory. The sub-sea section belongs to a consortium between Gazprom and Italy's ENI. Turkey is the consumer, 2/3 of its gas supplies come from Russia.
Interconnector Turkey-Greece (ITG) (gas)	296km long, operational since November 2007. Annual capacity: 7 bcm (currently working at 0.7).	210 km on Turkish territory. Establishes Turkey as a transit country.
Kirkuk-Ceyhan oil pipeline	970km long, operational since 1976. Daily capacity: 1.6 million barrels.	Turkey hosts Iraq's largest crude oil export line.
Western gas pipeline	842km long, operational since 1988. Brings Russian gas to Turkey shipped through Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine. Capacity: 8 bcm per year.	Turkey is the consumer. Two-thirds of its gas supplies come from Russia.

Source: Mark Leonard (2010), 'Turkey: An Actor, Not an Issue', in *The Spectre of a Multipolar Europe*, European Council on Foreign Relations, October 2010.



Figure 6. Turkey as an Energy Hub: Planned Pipelines

	Basic Facts	Turkey's Involvement
Nabucco gas pipeline	3,300km long, intergovernmental agreement signed by Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey in July 2009. Capacity: 30 bcm.	BOTAS holds 16.7% in the construction consortium (equal to other participants). May be sourced with gas from BTE, TAP, Iraq-Turkey and Iran-Syria pipelines.
South Stream gas pipeline	900km long, linking the Russian terminal of Dzhugba with Varna in Bulgaria and then crossing through Greece into Italy and through Serbia and Hungary into Austria. Annual capacity: 63 bcm	In November 2009, Turkey signed an agreement with Russia allowing the pipeline to cross its territorial waters in case Ukraine resists.
Interconnector Turkey-Greece-Italy (ITG)-gas	807km long, to extend ITG from Komofini to Otranto and raise annual capacity to 11 bcm.	Advances Turkey's role as a transit country.
Samsun-Ceyhan oil pipeline	550km long, transporting Russian and Kazakh oil from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Intergovernmental agreement between Turkey, Italy and Russia in October 2009.	To relieve traffic through the Straits and upgrade the Ceyhan terminal, alternative to the Burgas-Alexandroupolis project. The shares in the project company are still to be decided.
Trans-Adriatic Pipeline	520km long, to connect Thessaloniki with Brindisi through Albania. Annual capacity: 10 bcm.	To be supplied by Iranian and Azerbaijani gas transiting through Turkey.
Trans-Caspian Pipeline	Gas Under discussion, to bring Turkmen and Kazakh gas to BTE, possibly Nabucco. Annual capacity: 30 bcm.	Advances Turkey's role as a transit country.
Iraq-Turkey gas pipeline	Feasibility study commissioned in 2008. Annual capacity: 10 bcm.	May secure supply for Nabucco.

Source: Mark Leonard (2010), 'Turkey: An Actor, Not an Issue', in *The Spectre of a Multipolar Europe*, European Council on Foreign Relations, October 2010.

The agreement for the Nabucco pipeline was signed in July 2009 and it would not cross Russian territory. Construction is due to start in 2012, with the first gas flowing in 2015. When operating at full capacity, Nabucco would transport 1,550 bcm to Europe over 50 years. This means that an economy the size of Germany could be supplied solely with Nabucco gas for over 16 years (see Figure 7). The 1,760km oil pipeline between Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan via Georgia for onward shipment to western markets has been operational since 2006.



Figure 7. Projected Routes of Nord Stream, Nabucco and South Stream Pipelines



Source: CEOWORLD magazine.

In the words of Ruprecht Polenz, the Christian Democrat Union (CDU) Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the German Parliament, 'the supreme importance of secure energy supplies for our economic development now and in future makes it seem sensible to incorporate Turkey into the EU, and thus make it part of the common energy supply area into which the EU ought to develop'.⁵ Polenz is one of the few CDU leaders who strongly supports Turkey's full EU membership, and for many other reasons in addition to energy.

⁵ See p. 57 of Ruprecht Polenz's Paper for the Körber Foundation (http://www.koerber-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/internationale_politik/pdf/2010/Koerber_Policy_Paper_No_12.pdf).

(5) The Migration Impact

One of the main reasons for opposition to Turkey's EU membership is the fear that this would lead to a massive influx of Turks into the Union. The same scare tactic was used to oppose Spain's membership, particularly in France. It proved to be unfounded. Just as Spaniards did not migrate *en masse* to European countries after joining the EU in 1986 – they began to return to their own country before then when membership was in sight – so something similar is already happening in Turkey. The number of Turks who have returned home from Germany, the EU country with by far the largest Turkish community (an estimated 3.5 million people of Turkish origin live there), now exceeds the number of Turkish migrants arriving in Germany. This is not because Turkey's EU membership is around the corner, far from it, but because the Turkish economy is stronger, as a result of the reforms triggered by the process of joining the EU,⁶ and job prospects there are thus better than they were a decade ago.

Turkey does have a very large population (currently only some 6 million less than Germany's 81 million), but its demographics are improving. The annual population growth rate dropped from 1.7% in 1990-95 to a projected 1.1% in 2010-15, as a result of a drop in the fertility rate from 2.9 to 2.1 (in 1970-75 the fertility rate was 5.2). As the country becomes richer and better educated, particularly in the rural areas in the south-east, so the fertility rate can be expected to decline further.

The way to reduce the flow of Turkish migrants to Europe is to lock the country into the EU's macroeconomic framework and not to shut the country out.

(6) European Security and Defence Policy

The friction between Turkey and the EU, and in particular between Turkey and Cyprus, is a major barrier to closer links between the EU and NATO. The strains between the two blocs would worsen if Turkey were never to join the EU, to the detriment of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

While Turkey, with NATO's second-largest standing army after the US and an early member of the Alliance (in 1952) vetoes any attempt at allowing the Greek Cypriot authorities to access classified NATO documents, Cyprus (not a member of NATO) blocks Turkish participation in the EU's defence bodies. Turkey has no access to EU documents relating to military missions (even those in which it participates), and is not even allowed as an observer in relevant decision-making processes. It is the only NATO member not to have signed a security agreement with the EU. However, these obstacles to

⁶ The stand-by agreements of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have also played a significantly positive role.

NATO-EU cooperation cannot be solely attributed to the Cyprus problem: there is a lack of political will to include non-EU allies.

Turkey has long been part of the European security architecture. More than a decade ago it obtained a virtual member status within the Western European Union (WEU), but this proved to be of a temporary nature as the 1998 agreement between the UK and France, which paved the way for the establishment of a European Security and Defence Policy within EU structures, led to the disbanding of the WEU as the EU's security institution. It also meant the sudden vanishing of all the hard-fought *acquis* regarding the foundation of the security relationship between Turkey and the EU.

The security relationship between Turkey and the EU that then emerged was influenced to a large extent by the EU's internal political dynamics and, as of 2004, compounded by the EU enlargement and the entry of Cyprus, which, because it is not a member of NATO nor of the Partnership for Peace (PfP), cannot participate in EU missions drawn on NATO capabilities. Two years before Cyprus joined the EU, the European Council decided that only the member states that are simultaneously members of either NATO or the PfP were eligible for ESDP operations that use NATO assets. Turkey strictly interprets the North Atlantic Council decision of 2002 and blocks the participation of Cyprus in NATO-EU strategic cooperation. As Sinam Ülgen, a Turkish foreign policy expert, points out, Turkish policy-makers might have been more flexible had there been a clear political will on the EU side for supporting Turkey's full EU membership.⁷

Turkey's contribution to the ESDP surpasses that of several EU member states and it is the most active participant in ESDP missions among third countries. Turkey is the second-largest troop contributor to Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite the decision-making body –the European Defence Agency (EDA)– being completely off-limits to Ankara. Given the size of Turkey's army (the largest among European members of NATO) and of its defence budget, the country's non-participation in the EDA is a serious liability for this body.

Turkey also has more peace-keeping troops in Afghanistan than most EU countries, such as Spain, and is the only Muslim country to participate in the NATO-led mission (see Figure 8).

⁷ This whole issue is well explained by Sinam Ülgen at <http://www.edam.org.tr/images/PDF/yayinlar/makaleler/edam-discussion%20paper2%202008.pdf>.



Figure 8. ISAF Troops in Afghanistan, Main Countries

Current Troop Contribution	
US	90,000
UK	9,500
Germany	4,877
France	3,850
Canada	2,913
Italy	3,770
Poland	2,488
Turkey	1,815
Australia	1,550
Spain	1,505

Source: International Security Assistance Force.

Since the end of the Cold War, during which Turkey very much did the bidding of the US, and particularly since the launch of Turkey's new 'zero problem' foreign policy under Ahmet Davutoglu, who became Foreign Minister in May 2009 (see the next section), Turkish security doctrine is more comfortable with the EU's strategy, including its soft power, than with that of the US, still fundamentally based on hard power. Yet Turkey is institutionally excluded from EU security bodies and consequently cooperation with the EU is below potential.

Resolving the seemingly intractable problems of Cyprus –the issue of direct trade with the internationally-unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and reunification of the island (not in itself a *sine qua non* for Turkey's entry into the EU)– is the key to the whole process of Turkish-EU accession and hence to the institutional problems between NATO and the EU. But positions are very entrenched, and the Cyprus issue is a convenient fig leaf for countries to mask more profound objections to Turkey's EU membership (because it is large, poor and Muslim).

(7) Turkey's More Assertive Foreign Policy: An Asset Not a Liability

Unsurprisingly, Ankara's foreign policy is more assertive and increasingly looks toward the east. Since the end of the Cold War, when Turkey ceased to be the sentinel on the front line, it was only natural that the country should choose to forge a more independent foreign policy towards its backyard that reflected its own interests and not just those of its Nato allies, as well as its burgeoning economic strength. Now, given the pace of accession talks, Ankara is understandably even keener to keep all options open.

There has been a lot of silly talk about Turkey turning its back on the West in favour of re-engagement with the lands once ruled by its Sultans during the Ottoman Empire.⁸ Prime

⁸ The *New York Times* ran an article on 8 June, 2010 with the headline 'Turkey Goes from Pliable Ally to Thorn for the US' and its columnist Thomas Friedman, describing a trip to Istanbul, found 'Turkey's Islamist government seemingly focused not on joining the European Union but the Arab league – no, scratch that, on joining the Hamas-Hezbollah-Iran resistance front against Israel ... I exaggerate, but not that much.'



Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's belligerent rhetoric –which plays to the gallery of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), a party with Islamist roots– does not help matters as it antagonises people in the US and the EU.

Many of the steps taken under Ankara's 'zero-problem' foreign policy, a broad initiative to develop good relations with all of Turkey's neighbours (see Figure 9) and countries beyond, are clearly positive: mending fences with Syria (the old risk of war over issues such as Syria's backing of the PKK terrorist group during the 1990s has given way to visa-free travel); signing a landmark deal with Armenia to open the shared border (yet to happen) closed by Ankara since 1993 in support of its ally Azerbaijan (in conflict with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh); hosting talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan; and liaising with Sunni militants in Iraq. Relations with Georgia and Greece have greatly improved, and Russia has become Turkey's leading trading partner and one of its top suppliers of tourists. A Turk, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, won the first democratically-contested election to lead the 57-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

Turkey is becoming an influential actor with considerable 'soft power' in the Western Balkans and the Middle East. It is shaping up to be a constructive actor in the region. This can only benefit European security in the broadest sense and enhances Turkish claims for EU admission. And Turkey's greatly increased volume of trade with its neighbours is helping, albeit very modestly so far, to integrate the region more into the global system.

Figure 9. Turkey's Neighbours



Source: Financial Times.

Nonetheless, European capitals and Washington fret over two policies in particular: (1) the standoff with Israel (which for long saw Turkey as its only Muslim ally), following the Israeli raid in May 2010 on a Turkish-flagged aid flotilla seeking to break the Gaza blockade, in which nine Turks died; and (2) Turkey's friendly relation with Iran.



Turkey voted against the UN Security Council's additional sanctions on Iran, after the international community ignored the Turkish-Brazilian-Iranian transfer part of Iran's stockpile of uranium to Turkey. Prime Minister Erdogan may have been naïve in believing Tehran had good intentions, but had his confidence-building measure won wider support, it could have led to broader negotiations and a comprehensive solution. Moreover, Erdogan kept the US President, Barack Obama, informed and did not go behind his back. According to Hugh Pope, the Turkey/Cyprus project Director for the International Crisis Group, Ankara is 'profoundly opposed to nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, but it believes that proliferation is only likely to be prevented through persuasion, not threats'. Turkey's engagement with Iran and other hard-line states is based on a wish to modify these states' behaviour, not on a desire to ally with them.⁹ After all, Washington has been stuck in a standoff with Tehran for more than 30 years. Turkey's approach, however, was undermined by the haste with which Prime Minister Erdogan welcomed the controversial re-election of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (widely believed to have been fraudulent) in June 2009. As regards Israel, Erdogan's public outrage over the blockade is shared by many EU leaders in private.

Turkey's foreign policy would not be an easy fit within the EU. According to Ivan Krastev and Mark Leonard of the European Council on Foreign Relations, 'there is a real danger that the blend of electoral populism, the resurgent Kurdish issue and embroilment in assorted conflicts in the Middle East and the southern Caucasus will make Ankara an awkward partner. The robustness of the EU anchor therefore remains critical.'¹⁰ The benefits of Turkey's foreign policy, with the country in the EU, however, would outweigh the disadvantages. In the words of a report by the Transatlantic Academy, Turkey's foreign policy is 'an asset to the Western Alliance precisely because its policies in the neighbourhood are distinct and not simply a replica of (often unsuccessful) American and EU policies in these regions'.¹¹

(8) The Cyprus Problem

The Lisbon Treaty appeared to offer a way out of the stalemate over the direct trade regulation, by granting the European Parliament (EP) a voice in the thorny issue. But hopes were dashed when the EP's legal affairs committee questioned the legal basis on which the European Commission had proposed direct trade between the EU and the internationally-unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Yet again, Cyprus was vindicated. Had the EP decided that the regulation was an international trade

⁹ See Hugh Pope (2010), 'Pax Ottomana', *Foreign Affairs*, November-December.

¹⁰ See Chapter 4 of European Council of Foreign Relations (2010), *The Spectre of a Multipolar Europe*, http://www.ecfr.eu/content/entry/the_spectre_of_a_multipolar_europe_publication, and Ahmet Evin *et al.*, *Getting to Zero. Turkey, its Neighbours and the West*, Transatlantic Academy, http://www.bosch-stiftung.de/content/language1/downloads/Report_TA_GettingtoZeroFINAL.pdf.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

matter it could have voted on it and exerted pressure on EU governments to move from unanimity to majority voting.

Equally unresolved, after 36 years, is the issue of the reunification of the island (see Figure 10). There is no direct linkage between the two issues, but if the direct trade issue was resolved, which would enable talks to start on many chapters after Ankara complied with the 'opening benchmarks' set by the EU, and the TRNC was no longer isolated Turkey might lose interest in a reunification settlement.

Figure 10. Cyprus



Source: BBC.

Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General, fired a shot across the bows of the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot leaders last November when he warned them in a report that a 'critical window of opportunity is rapidly closing' for reunification of the island, divided since 1974, and their negotiations run the risk of 'foundering fatally'.

Turkey's non-membership of the EU, for whatever reason, would probably leave Cyprus permanently divided by a formal partition of the Greek-Cypriot south of the island and the Turkish-Cypriot north. The TRNC could then either become a separate and possibly recognised country or consolidate itself as the 82nd province of Turkey, which is what effectively it is at the moment. In this scenario, Greek Cypriots would forego the economic boost of reunification over the long term and tensions would rise in the eastern Mediterranean.

(9) The Loss of a Beacon for the Middle East?

Turkey's EU accession process is engineering a political and economic transformation of the country, albeit in fits and starts, which is being closely watched in the Middle East. Were Turkey to join the EU, the country would be consolidated as a beacon for the spreading of liberal ideas and practices in its neighbourhood. It would show that democracy and the Islamic faith are compatible. This would be particularly important in multicultural Europe. Failure to enter the EU would run the risk of dampening the reformist spirit in Turkey and diminishing the country's positive influence in its region.

Just as the EU's soft power –defined by Joseph Nye, the inventor of the term, as the 'ability to shape the preferences of others'– is credited with transforming eight formerly communist Eastern and Central European countries into democracies and free-market economies and for acting as a catalyst for the modernisation of Turkey, so too Turkey's own emerging soft power is beginning to be felt in its region.¹² Soft power has proved to be much more effective in shaping societies than US hard (military) power.

Twenty-five years ago, when Spain joined the EU, Turkey had just about recovered from its military regime of 1980-82, the combined value of its annual exports of goods and services was not even one-tenth of today's US\$100 billion, broadcast media consisted of state television and radio (today there are more than 200 TV channels and over 1,000 radio stations) and getting a phone line installed required waiting several months (today Turkey has more than 90 mobile phone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, well above the world average of around 60). There was no non-stop flight between Istanbul and New York in 1986, as opposed to today's more than 20 flights a week to the US. During this period Turkey has created a sizeable middle class. Take just one indicator and compare it with Egypt, whose population is roughly the same as Turkey's. Egypt, whose petrol-pump prices are a fraction of Turkey's, has 29 passenger cars per 100 inhabitants (2007) compared with Turkey's 88.

Figures 11 and 12 show how far ahead Turkey is of other Muslim countries in its region. These nations are held back, to a much greater extent than Turkey, by three critical deficits: knowledge, freedom and women's empowerment.¹³ Another factor holding back Arab countries has been Islamic Law, which acted as a drag on development by slowing or blocking the emergence of central features of modern economic life, including private capital accumulation, corporations, large-scale production and impersonal exchange.¹⁴

Figure 11. Comparative Indicators of Economic Performance, 2007

Region, country or country grouping	Human Development Index	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Adult literacy rate (%)	Per capita GDP (PPP US\$)
Middle East	0.73	69.4	74.7	9,418
Arab League	0.70	68.5	69.6	8,103
Iran	0.78	71.2	82.3	10,955
Turkey	0.81	71.7	88.7	12,955
OECD (except Turkey)	0.94	77.8	99.0	33,755

Notes: as of 2007, the Arab League had 22 members and the OECD included 30 of the world's most industrialised countries. Regional and organisation averages are population-weighted. Certain indexes were unavailable for three Arab League members (Iraq, Palestinian Authority and Somalia).

Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2007-8, prepared by Timur Kuran, page 4 of his book *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton University Press, 2011).

¹² See *An Unpolished Gem: Turkey's Soft Power* by Hakan Altınay, Executive Director of the Open Society Institute, Istanbul (http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_7057/is_2_10/ai_n28539341/).

¹³ These issues were studied in the first Arab Human Development Report (2002).

¹⁴ This overlooked issue is studied by Timur Kuran (2011), *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Bank the Middle East*, Princeton University Press.



Figure 12. Comparative Indicators of Political Performance, 2008-09

Region, country or country grouping	Civil liberties 1 (most) to 10	Political rights 1 (strongest) to 10	Corruption perceptions 1 to 10 (least corrupt)	Rule of law -2.5 to 2.5 (best)
Middle East	5.1	5.6	2.9	-0.3
Arab League	5.4	6.1	2.8	-0.6
Iran	6.0	6.0	1.8	-0.8
Turkey	3.0	3.0	4.4	0.1
OECD (except Turkey)	1.4	1.1	6.8	1.2

Note: for the country groupings, see Figure 11.

Sources: Freedom House, *Freedom in the World Report*, 2008, first two columns; Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index*, 2009 World Bank Rule of Law Indicators, 2008 prepared by Timur Kuran, page 17 of his book *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton University Press, 2011).

The proliferation of private wealth in Turkey, albeit with a very skewed income distribution, coupled with the greater degree of democracy, is creating a more vibrant civil society, which is increasingly admired in the Middle East, except among Islamic fundamentalists and political elites in the authoritarian regimes. The Ankara bureau of Al Jazeera, the Arabic-language TV network, is second only to its Washington bureau among the non-Arab offices in the number of stories filed, be they about politics or football. Popular Turkish TV shows enjoy a big following in Egypt, Iran and Syria, despite the language barrier. Turkish television is a bridge between the Arab world and a Western way of life, as depicted in Turkey's secular society. A public opinion survey showed that 61% of respondents from seven Arab countries saw Turkey as a model for the Arab world.¹⁵

The Turkish development agency TIKA channels a significant amount of money into countries, many of them in the region. Some of these funds go to good-governance programmes and to help empower women. Turkish NGOs are also engaged in projects in neighbouring countries promoting the dissemination of democratic values and entrepreneurship.

Tourism is another area attracting Turkey's neighbours and enabling them to see for themselves the changes in the country.

Halkan Altınay, who heads the Open Society Institute in Istanbul, part of the Soros Foundations Network, which is particularly active in promoting civil society, likens Turkey's soft power to an unpolished gem. As progress is made in the EU accession negotiations and Turkey becomes more democratic and wealthier so the gem will sparkle more. If the country does not join the EU, the gem will lose lustre.

¹⁵ See Mensur Akgun *et al.* (2009), *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East*, TESEV.



(10) Conclusion: Kick-starting Negotiations

The door to full membership seems forever closed. This provides little incentive for the government to push through the reforms required for membership. The EU's last report on Turkey's progress showed that there is still a long way to go in areas of fundamental rights.¹⁶ Particularly worrying is the deterioration in media freedom.

The golden period of reforms by the AKP was between 2002 and 2005, since when the pace has slowed down notably, though not just because of the blocking of so many chapters. Resistance from the secular establishment, particularly entrenched in the military, the judiciary and parts of the media, has also been a major obstacle and generated almost constant friction with the AKP. Even if the chapters remain blocked, Ankara needs to carry on with its democratic reforms as they are good in themselves.

The 'yes' vote by a significant margin (58% vs 42%) in Turkey's constitutional referendum last September, in the face of secularists' claims that the religiously-conservative AKP is seeking to introduce theocracy, shows there is broad support for more reforms. Turkey's EU supporters, including Spain, should build on this opportunity in 2011. A new, liberal constitution is expected to be drawn up after the elections this year.

EU governments should come clean and start 'talking Turkey'. So far, there has been little more than double-talk and evasiveness, even among its supporters. For example, the day after championing Turkish membership in Ankara, the British Premier David Cameron said the number of immigrants coming into the UK from non-EU countries should be sharply reduced. This just sends out a confusing message.

A confidence-building measure would be to invite the Turkish President or Prime Minister to EU summits, which was the case before 2007 for the leaders of candidate countries.¹⁷

Resolving the Cyprus problem would unblock many chapters. As Jack Straw, the British Foreign Secretary between 2001 and 2006, pointed out, 'Europe's strategic future with Turkey is now hostage to negotiations over Cyprus'.¹⁸ Straw said there were still serious concerns about corruption and inadequate judicial systems in Bulgaria and Rumania, but, nevertheless, they joined the EU in 2004. 'Yet the EU chose (and I was party to this) to apply a Nelson's eye to some of these shortcomings in pursuit of a wider strategic goal. In other words, the EU showed some practical vision now so lamentably lacking for Turkey'.

¹⁶ See http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/press_corner/key-documents/reports_nov_2010_en.htm.

¹⁷ This was partly to appease Bulgaria and Romania over not being allowed to join the EU in 2004.

¹⁸ See "No ifs or buts, Turkey must be part of the EU", *The Times*, 8/XI/2010.



Turkey's sheer size, with a population of 75 million, does make it a difficult fit into the EU. Perhaps the time has come to face up to the question of complete free movement of people and tell Ankara this would not happen for years, if at all, even after Turkey joined. However, the country would enjoy many other advantages of EU membership. It is possible that Ankara would accept this in return for greater visa facilities now. It is absurd that citizens of Serbia, Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina all enjoy visa-free travel to Europe, while Turkish businessmen are often denied visas to attend trade fairs and students cannot study abroad. Turkish entrepreneurs in Europe already run €40 billion worth of businesses, and employ around half a million people.

The EU-Turkey Customs Union is an uneven relationship and needs to be better balanced. It allows EU business people to travel to Turkey freely, while enabling Turkish processed goods to enter the EU, but Turkish businessmen (let alone all citizens) are prevented by the Schengen visa requirements from travelling hassle-free to Europe to promote their products. The Customs Union requires Turkey to implement the EU's Common External Tariff. As a result, when the EU agrees free-trade accords with third-party countries, Turkey has to implement the terms, but third-party countries are not obliged to open their markets to Turkey.

A re-engagement with Turkey might help galvanise a credible and electable social-democratic alternative to the AKP in the 2011 elections. The euro-sceptic and rigidly secularist Republican People's Party (CHP), established by the pro-European and reformist Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the father of modern Turkey, is a pale shadow of its former self and an insult to its founder. The CHP's new leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, is attempting to remould the party as a force in favour of EU membership.

In 2011 the EU should give Turkey a firm target date for accession. This should be 2023, to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the republic. Turkish disillusionment and EU prevarication is creating a vicious circle that needs to be broken in 2011 and, in its place, the virtuous circle of Turkey-EU convergence re-established.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Turkey's Progress in Negotiating Chapters as of January 2011

(a) Opened and provisionally closed

25. Science and research (Austria: 12/VI/)

(b) Opened

- 4. Free movement of capital (France: 18/XII/2008)
- 6. Company law (Slovenia: 12/VI/2008)
- 7. Intellectual property rights (Slovenia: 12/VI/2008)
- 10. Info society and media (France: 18/XII/2008)
- 12. Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy (Spain: 30/VI/2010)
- 16. Taxation (The Czech Republic: 30/VI/2009)
- 18. Statistics (Germany: 26/VI/2007)
- 20. Enterprise and industrial policy (Germany: 28/II/2007)
- 21. Trans European networks (Portugal: 19/XII/2007)
- 28. Consumer and health protection (Portugal: 19/XII/2007)
- 32. Financial control (Germany: 26/VI/2007)

(c) Chapters to be negotiated

- 2. Free movement of workers
- 5. Public procurement
- 8. Competition policy
- 10. Information society and media
- 12. Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy
- 15. Energy
- 18. Statistics
- 19. Social policy and employment
- 20. Enterprise and industrial policy
- 21. Trans-European networks
- 23. Judiciary and fundamental rights
- 24. Justice, freedom and security
- 25. Science and research
- 26. Education and culture
- 27. Environment
- 28. Consumer and health protection
- 31. Foreign, security and defence policy
- 32. Financial control

(d) Chapters suspended over Cyprus by the European Council in December 2006 until Turkey complies with its obligations under the Additional Protocol

- 1. Free movement of goods
- 3. Right of establishment and freedom to provide services
- 9. Financial services
- 11. Agricultural and rural affairs
- 13. Fisheries
- 14. Transport policy
- 29. Customs Union
- 30. External relations

(e) Chapters opposed by France

- 11. Agricultural and rural affairs
- 17. Economic and monetary policy
- 22. Regional policy and coordination of structural funds
- 33. Financial and budgetary provisions
- 34. Institutions

(f) Chapters opposed by Cyprus

- 2. Free movement of workers
- 15. Energy



- 23. Judiciary and fundamental rights
- 24. Justice, freedom and security
- 26. Education and culture
- 31. Foreign, security and defence policy

Appendix 2. Timeline: The Long and Winding Road to EU Accession

February 18 1952

Turkey becomes a full member of Nato.

September 20 1959

Turkey applies to the European Economic Community (EEC) to become an associate member.

May 27 1960

The army stages a *coup* and remains in power until October 1961. It draws up a new constitution and establishes a mechanism to intervene in politics, the National Security Council.

September 12 1963

Turkey is made an associate member of the EEC.

July 22 1970

Turkey signs an agreement foreseeing its eventual full membership of the bloc.

March 12 1971

The army hands an ultimatum to Prime Minister Demirel's government. On April 27 1971 martial law is declared in 11 provinces; some leftist and religious political parties are closed down. The state security courts, heavily influenced by the military, are created. The direct influence of the military lasted until the October 1973 elections.

July 20 1974

Turkey invades Cyprus by sea and air following the failure of diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. After gaining control over 40% of the island, Turkey unilaterally declares a ceasefire.

February 13 1975

Turkish Cypriots establish their own state in the north of the island. Later that year Turkey takes control of most of the US installations within that territory, except the joint defence base at Incirlik, which it reserves for 'Nato tasks alone'.

1978-79

The EC suggests that Turkey applies for membership along with Greece. Ankara declines the suggestion.

September 12 1980

After months of street fighting between rival left-wing and right-wing factions, a third army *coup* topples the Turkish government. Military rule lasts until November 1983. Relations with the EC are virtually frozen.

1983

Northern Cyprus declares its territory as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The state is recognised by no one else but mainland Turkey. Parliamentary elections are held in Turkey and military rule is ended. Relations with the EC begin to normalise.

May 1984

The Council of Europe accepts the participation of Turkish parliamentarians.

January 26 1987

Turkey recognises the right of its citizens to file complaints with the European Human Rights Commission.

April 14 1987

Turkey applies to the EC for full membership.

December 18 1989

The European Commission endorses Turkey's eligibility for membership, but defers the assessment of its application.

January 1 1996

A Customs Union between the now-named European Union (EU) and Turkey enters into force for industrial goods and processed agricultural products.

December 13 1997

At the Luxembourg summit, EU leaders decline to grant candidate status to Turkey. Ankara reacts angrily, freezing relations and contacts.

June 2 1999

Abdullah Ocalan, the founder of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), who led a violent 15-year campaign for independence for Turkey's 14 million or so Kurds, is convicted by Turkey of treason and separatism and sentenced to death (not carried out).

December 10 1999

The EU summit in Helsinki recognises Turkey as a 'candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of



the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States'.

April 2000

The composition of the State Security Courts is changed, to exclude members of the military.

March 2001

The EU approves the Accession Partnership document, which sets out the political, economic and legislative reforms that Turkey has to carry out to fulfil the accession criteria. Cyprus is included as part of the 'Political Dialogue and Political Criteria'.

March 19 2001

The Turkish Government publishes the National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis*, with a detailed explanation of the reforms to fulfil the accession criteria.

October 3 2001

The Turkish Grand National Assembly approved 34 amendments to the Constitution, the most ambitious overhaul since its entry into force in 1982, in order to meet the Copenhagen political criteria.

August 3 2002

The Turkish Parliament passes sweeping reforms, including the abolition of the death penalty and the easing of bans on the use of the Kurdish language, to meet some of the EU's human-rights criteria.

November 3 2002

The conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP), which has Islamic roots, wins a general election partially on a pledge to drive forward Turkey's sagging EU bid.

November 30 2002

The state of emergency in all remaining provinces of the south-east was lifted.

December 11 2002

The Turkish Parliament approves a clutch of constitutional reforms that make it harder to shut down parties and easier to prosecute torturers.

December 12 2002

The EU summit at Copenhagen decides to accept Cyprus in May 2004, despite faltering talks to reunify the island. It proposes a December 2004 review of Turkey's progress in fulfilling the Copenhagen political criteria for EU membership, and if the outcome is positive accession negotiations will be opened 'without delay'.

April 2003

The EU Council approves a revised Accession Partnership, specifying the remaining priority areas for reform. In July the Turkish government publishes a revised National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis*.

July 2003

The seventh reform package reduces the influence of the armed forces via the powerful National Security Council. The Council becomes more of an advisory body.

November 5 2003

The European Commission released its sixth regular report on Turkey's progress towards accession. It said the government had 'shown great determination in accelerating the pace of reforms' but 'on the ground, implementation of the reforms is uneven'. The report warned that Turkey's hopes of starting formal accession talks with the EU could face a 'serious obstacle' if no settlement is reached over the divided island of Cyprus by May 2004 (when Cyprus joins the EU).

January 15 2004

Romano Prodi is the first President of the European Commission to visit Turkey since 1963.

March 31 2004

Talks on a revised UN plan for the unification of Cyprus failed to win endorsement from the leaders of the island's Greeks. But the United Nations decided to go ahead anyway and put its plans to a vote in both parts of Cyprus on April 24, ahead of the island's entry into the EU on May 1.

April 24 2004

The Greek-Cypriot part of Cyprus entered the EU, but not the Turkish-Cypriot part, after more than three-quarters of Greek-Cypriots voted against the UN plan to reunite the island. Turkish-Cypriots, in contrast, endorsed the plan. Both sides had to accept the reunification plan in order for the whole island to join the EU.

September 6 2004

An Independent Commission of Europeans who previously held high positions in public office, including Marcelino Oreja, a former Spanish Foreign Minister and EU Commissioner, called for the EU to treat Turkey's case with 'respect, fairness and consideration'.

September 13 2004

Less than a month before the landmark report by the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards meeting the criteria for starting accession talks, Brussels warned Ankara that unless it removed proposals before parliament to criminalise adultery it would not meet the minimum criteria required of aspiring members. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish Prime Minister, accused the EU of interfering in the country's internal affairs, but withdrew the proposals.

September 26, 2004



The Turkish parliament held an emergency session and approved reforms of the penal code including tougher sentences for torture and 'honour killings'.

October 6, 2004

The European Commission issues a report recommending that the European Council at its meeting in December opens accession negotiations, but with certain conditions.

December 17, 2004

EU leaders agree at the Brussels summit to open talks on Turkey's EU accession. The decision, made at a summit in Brussels, follows a deal over an EU demand that Turkey recognise Cyprus as an EU member.

October 3, 2005

EU membership negotiations officially launched.

June 2006

Parliament passes new anti-terror law, which worries the EU.

December 11, 2006

The EU partially freezes membership talks because of Ankara's failure to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriot traffic.

July 22, 2007

The AK Party wins the parliamentary elections, which were brought forward to try and end the stand-off between secularists and Islamists over the choice of Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül as the next President. His candidacy was opposed by the army.

August 28, 2007

Abdullah Gül is elected president by the parliament.

July 30, 2008

Petition to the constitutional court to have the governing AK Party banned for allegedly undermining the secular constitution fails by a narrow margin.

October 20, 2008

Trial starts of 86 suspected members of a shadowy ultra-nationalist Ergenekon group, which is accused of plotting a series of attacks and provoking a military coup against the government.

July 9, 2009

President Abdullah Gül approves legislation giving civilian courts the power to try military personnel for threatening national security or involvement in organised crime.

October 10, 2009

Turkey and Armenia agree to normalise relations at a meeting in Switzerland. Both parliaments will need to ratify the accord. Turkey says opening the shared border will depend on progress on resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

April 2010

Parliament begins debating constitutional changes in order to make Turkey more democratic. The opposition Republican People's Party says the AKP is seeking more control over the secular judiciary with some of the proposals.

May 8, 2010

The Reflecting Group, chaired by the former Spanish Prime Minister Felipe González, presented its report to the European Council on the future of the EU 2030. It said the Union 'must honour its commitments with regard to the current official candidates, including Turkey, and carry on with the negotiation process.'

September 12, 2010

Amendments to the constitution were approved in a referendum by 58% of voters and rejected by 42%.

November 9, 2010

The European Commission's annual progress report on Turkey's accession talks was the most positive for a number of years, but still pointed out deficiencies in various areas of fundamental rights.

November 25, 2010

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon released a report on the negotiations to reunify Cyprus and warned that a 'critical window of opportunity' to resolve the issue was 'closing rapidly'.

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